

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 215860
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 215860

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PDEV, RH, US, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA: SOVIET AND CHINESE ANGLES
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 215860

REF: LUSAKA 2682

1. AS WE APPROACH THE TIME WHEN WE PLAN TO GO TO THE
SECURITY COUNCIL TO SEEK ACTION ON THE UK/US RHODESIA
INITIATIVE AND THE CONTACT GROUP (UK, FRANCE, FRG,
CANADA AND US) PACKAGE ON NAMIBIA, QUESTION OF SOVIET
ATTITUDE BECOMES MORE CRUCIAL FOR OUR PLANNING. WE HAD

HELD OFF RAISING MATTERS WITH SOVIETS UNTIL NOW, BELIEVING THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF GETTING SYMPATHETIC SOVIET HEARING UNLESS IT WERE CLEAR THAT WE HAD SUPPORT OF FRONT-LINE AFRICAN STATES AND OAU IN GENERAL. NOW THAT UK/US RHODESIA PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO SC AND BRITISH APPEAR WANT ACTION BY SECURITY COUNCIL WITHIN WEEKS AND IN VIEW LIKELY NEED FOR CONNCIL ACTION ON NAMIBIA WITHIN SAME GENERAL TIME FRAME, WE NEED VIEWS OF ACTION ADDRESSEES AS TO LIKELY SOVIET REACTION AND HOW IT SHOULD BE HANDLED. OUR CURRENT READING, AS EXPLAINED BELOW, IS THAT CHINESE ARE NOT LIKELY TO CAUSE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES. WE WOULD WELCOME USUN'S COMMENTS AND ANY VIEWS USLO PEKING WISHES TO ADD ON PRC ANGLE.

2. AS EXPECTED, SOVIETS HAVE SHOWN NO ENTHUSIASM FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA INITIATIVES IN WHICH THEY HAVE NO ROLE TO PLAY. IN FACT, THEY ARE LIKELY TO PLAY A SPOILER ROLE, UNLESS THEY CONCLUDE THAT RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN INITIATIVES ARE LIKELY TO SUCCEED, WHICH DEPENDS IN TURN UPON MOSCOW'S ASSESSMENT OF DEPTH OF COMMITMENTS OF FRONT-LINE STATES AND OTHER KEY AFRICANS TO SETTLEMENT PLANS. WE PRESUME THAT IN ADDITION TO SNIPING AT OUR POLICY FROM BEHIND THE SCENES, MOSCOW HAS ATTEMPTED TO REINFORCE DOUBTS OF NKOMO (REFTEL) AND OTHERS RE UK/UN INTENTIONS AND VIABILITY OF PLAN WE HAVE PUT FORWARD. WITH AFRICAN GROUP REPRESENTED IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 215860

SC BY BENIN, LIBYA AND MAURITIUS, SOVIET CAPACITY FOR MISCHIEF-MAKING IS ENHANCED. STILL, WE EXPECT THAT FRONT-LINE CAN PRODUCE AT LEAST FRAGILE AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR SC ENDORSEMENT OF UK/US RHODESIA INITIATIVE AND CONTACT GROUP PROPOSALS ON NAMIBIA.

3. WE PRESUME SYG WALDHEIM WILL DISCUSS RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA IN MOSCOW AND THAT WE WILL GET SOME READ-OUT AFTER HIS RETURN LATER THIS MONTH. BUT GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY WE WILL HAVE TO CONSULT BILATERALLY WITH THE SOVIETS DURING THE COMING WEEKS (E.G., BILATERALS ON UN MATTERS IN NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 16, GROMYKO MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON SEPTEMBER 22-23, FOLLOW-UP IN NEW YORK) WE NEED TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO ENGAGE SOVIETS BILATERALLY ON THESE ISSUES.

4. ALTHOUGH EXACT FORM OF UK OR JOINT UK/US APPROACH TO SC ON RHODESIA IS NOT YET DECIDED, WE BELIEVE THAT COUNCIL WOULD BE ASKED TO TAKE NOTE OF PACKAGE SUBMITTED BY UK FOREIGN SECRETARY IN HIS SEPTEMBER 1 LETTER AND TO INSTRUCT SYG TO NAME SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT.

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO WORK WITH UK-APPOINTED RESIDENT COMMISSIONER IN SEEKING, THROUGH TALKS WITH PARTIES, TO IMPLEMENT UK/US SETTLEMENT PACKAGE. ON NAMIBIA, FORM AND CONTENT OF APPROACH TO SC ALSO UNCLEAR, BUT WE HOPE THAT PARTIES WILL BE IN AGREEMENT PRIOR TO REQUEST FOR SC ACTION. IN BOTH CASES SOVIETS WOULD BE PRESENTED WITH OPPORTUNITY TO CALL A HALT ON INITIATIVES. IN CASE OF RHODESIA, FOR EXAMPLE, SOVIETS COULD PROPOSE MEASURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN AN EFFORT TO EMBARRASS OR DISCREDIT UK/US IN EYES OF AFRICANS.

5. WE CAN SEE TWO POSSIBLE WAYS OF DEALING WITH THIS:
1) LEAVING THE AFRICANS, NON-ALIGNED AND OTHER MEMBERS
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PAGE 04 STATE 215860

OF THE COUNCIL TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO MOSCOW THAT

INITIATIVES HAVE THEIR SUPPORT AND TO PRESSURE SOVIETS TO ACCEDE, HOWEVER GRUDGINGLY, TO THE INITIATIVE; OR
2) CONSULTING ACTIVELY WITH SOVIETS IN HOPES OF MINIMIZING THEIR OBJECTIONS. IF WE CHOOSE THE CONSULTATION ROUTE, OUR AIM WOULD PRESUMABLY BE TO PREPARE THE SOVIETS FOR FURTHER APPROACHES BY THE AFRICANS DESIGNED TO BRING THEM ALONG. WE ASSUME THAT AT VERY LEAST SOVIETS WOULD NOT WISH TO APPEAR IN ISOLATED POSITION OF OPPOSITION TO RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN INITIATIVES AND BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR KILLING PROPOSALS SUPPORTED BY AFRICANS.

6. WHILE USUN AND MOSCOW SHOULD NOT RAISE RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA WITH SOVIETS AT THIS TIME, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS AS TO WHAT STEPS WE MIGHT USEFULLY TAKE NEXT.

7. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO CLEAR READING ON PRC'S POSITION, WE HAVE IMPRESSION, BASED IN LARGE MEASURE ON PRC PERFORMANCE AT PREVIOUS UNGA SESSIONS, THAT VIEWS OF AFRICANS WILL BE CRUCIAL COMPONENT IN DETERMINING HOW PRC HANDLES BOTH RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN ISSUES. WE WOULD WELCOME USUN'S VIEWS ON THIS POINT AS WELL AS ANY INPUT USLO PEKING MAY HAVE.

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